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SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL PGOV DPKO UN AU SU

SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR PEACEKEEPING TO PRESS SUDAN  
ON UNAMID TROOPS

¶1. (SBU) Summary: On November 11, visiting UN Assistant Secretary-General (A/SYG) for Peacekeeping Operations Edmond Mulet

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briefed Ambassadors in Khartoum on UNAMID deployment issues. While in Sudan, Mulet will seek Sudanese commitment on outstanding issues including approved composition of UN-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) troops. End summary.

NO GOS AGREEMENT ON TROOPS

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¶2. (SBU) Mulet said that the UN and African Union (AU) have agreed on the composition of the UNAMID deployment, but the Government of Sudan (GOS) has not responded formally to the UN's offer of troops. He said he is in Sudan to press the Government of Sudan (GOS) on this issue. He said the UN believes the African character of UNAMID has been respected in its proposal to the GOS, with 75 percent African troops and only specific technical capabilities provided by non-African troops.

¶3. (SBU) Mulet said that by mid-week he hoped to resolve the issue of composition with the GOS. Mulet said that the UN will not wait for a final approval from the GOS on the overall UN/DPKO proposal before deploying troops; troops will be deployed as soon as there is GOS approval for each commitment. He added that 80 percent of the offered troops have been authorized by the GOS. He said the GOS has been receptive in preliminary discussions, promising that all issues would be resolved. However, Mulet said the UN expects administrative roadblocks further down the Sudanese chain of command.

QUALITY OF TROOPS

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¶4. (SBU) Mulet pointed out that it's difficult to find troops for most UN peacekeeping missions, especially troops and equipment that are up to UN standards. He said that helicopters were offered by one nation (Jordan) but were refused as they did not meet UN standards. The Canadian representative asked whether additional helicopters will be needed, and if so, must they be operated by the donor nation's own military? Mulet replied that 18 transport helicopters are still needed and must be operated by the nation's own military so they can be deployed quickly.

UNAMID CIVILIAN COMPONENT

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¶5. (SBU) Asked if there was a concern regarding civilian recruitment for UNAMID, Mulet said that civilian recruitment is well underway. As an example, he said that the deputy for UNAMID administration will arrive this week, and that additional recruitment will continue

in "an effective way." He noted that it was very difficult to hire civilians and police officers for UNMIS, and similar challenges would likely affect UNAMID recruitment.

LOGISTICS REMAIN A CONCERN

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¶6. (SBU) Mulet said he is concerned about logistics, and noted that UNAMID still needs two heavy-truck transport units. He said that GOS red tape continues to delay resolution of issues such as landing rights and night flight clearances but was optimistic those issues would be soon resolved. He added that local governments in Darfur also slow down implementation by asking for documents "as if there was another border between them and Khartoum." He asked the embassies present to press the GOS on these concerns (Note: CDA will be doing so later this week with State Minister of Foreign Affairs Al-Samani al-Wasila). However, Mulet stressed "we will be ready by January 1."

IS THE TIMETABLE TOO OPTIMISTIC?

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¶7. (SBU) The Turkish representative opined that the UNSCR 1769 timetable is too optimistic and asked if the A/SYG sincerely believes that UNAMID will be operational by December 31? Mulet replied that the initial operational capability will be ready by then, but full operational capability will take many more months. "This all will take time and will be completed in stages," he said.

THE LIBYANS QUESTION NEED FOR EUROPEANS

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¶8. (SBU) The Libyan representative said that given that the African nations have provided sufficient numbers of troops and the Europeans can provide technical support without a military presence, why

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should the UN continue to pressure the GOS to accept European troops? Mulet replied that no European country has offered combat troops - only engineering capabilities. He said other troops, such as the Thais and Bangladeshis, are ready to deploy now and so the GOS should consider their use.

SEPARATE MANDATES BUT COORDINATION TO CONTINUE

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¶9. (SBU) Mulet noted that with the recently-arrived UN Special Representative for the Secretary-General Ashraf Qazi and the standing-up of the UNAMID headquarters in El-Fasher, UNMIS could now focus more exclusively on implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). He noted that UNMIS and UNAMID have separate mandates and separate organizational structures. Nonetheless, he said that he expected cooperation between the two UN missions in Sudan to continue and added that to facilitate this, the UN has created an UNMIS-UNAMID coordination unit.

¶10. (SBU) Comment: Although the briefing was intended to allay concerns that the UN has been slow to organize UNAMID deployment, it is clear that many hurdles remain. The UN will have to be more nimble administratively and aggressive politically if they are to work around GOS roadblocks and administrative entanglements that the Sudanese are so effective at erecting. Mulet did not raise the issue of UNAMID radio authorization.

FERNANDEZ